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Since the beginning of this year, radical price changes have become the rule in the state-owned "NARMAG" stores. The official justification is that prices must be regulated in accordance with the harvest; but prices have been changed even on articles, such as rice and sugar, which are dependent upon imports, not on variations in the harvest.

The prices of scarce foodstuffs are as follows (in leva):

Salami, per kg	40
Goose, per kg live weight	18
Turkey, per kg live weight	30
Chicken, per kg live weight	25
Rabbit, per kg	30-40
Nuts, per kg	12
Honey, per kg	40
Sugar, per kg	10

Producers' prices and retail prices of foodstuffs are shown in the following table (in leva):

	Price Paid by the State to Producers	Retail Price in "NARMAG" Stores
Whole milk, per liter	0.30	--
Skim milk, per liter	--	3.20
Beef, per kg live weight	2.00	--
Beef, per kg slaughter weight	--	16.00
Potatoes, per kg	0.40	1.15
Onions, per kg	0.30	0.85

The state does not discriminate against the individual farmer in the payments made for his products, for all farmers are extremely discriminated against to the same degree. Discrimination against the individual farmer is shown by denying him fertilizer and machinery, and particularly in setting the quantities of food he must deliver. For example, every individual farmer must surrender 150 kilograms of beef per year, live weight, whether or not he owns beef cattle. If he has no beef to surrender, he must buy it on the free market at eight times the price that he will receive for it from the state.(1)

The following shows the contrast between the wages of Bulgarian laborers and the salaries of officials, and reveals the standard of living for the laborer by comparing his daily wage to the prices of foodstuffs, alcoholic beverages, and textiles at state-owned stores and on the free market:

Daily wages for laborers	
Assistant laborer, 10 hours per day average	13 leva
Skilled worker, 10 hours per day average	15-18 leva
Highly skilled foreman in metallurgical plant, highest daily wage schedule	23.80 leva
Monthly salaries of officials	
High party or government functionary	1,052 leva
High government official	864 leva
Average government official	544 leva

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[Five days earlier the same source reported that "by way of comparison, the monthly salary of a laborer is 450-500 leva; that of a skilled worker, 600-700 leva; that of a specialist, 800-1,000 leva; and that of a party functionary or official, 1,000-1,200 leva."]

Prices of foodstuffs at the beginning of June 1953 (in leva)

	Price in State-Owned "NARMAG" Stores	Price on Free Market
Black bread, per kg	1.96	--
White "Dobrudzhanka" bread	3.80	--
Black flour	--	4.00
White flour	6.80	4.00
Cornmeal	--	4.00
Paste products, per kg	9.00	--
Grits, per kg	8.00	--
Rice, per kg	10.00	9.00
Skim milk, per liter	3.80	--
Whole milk, per liter	--	4.00
Sheep's milk cheese, per kg	12.80	--
Cheese with high fat content, per kg	20.00	--
Butter, per kg	25.00	30-40
Edible oil, per liter	15.00	--
Lard, per kg	20.00	--
Beef, per kg	14-16	--
Veal, per kg	18-20	--
Pork, per kg	24.00	--
Lamb, per kg	20.00	--
Sausage, per kg	38.00	--
Ham, per kg	34.00	--
Egg, one	0.95	--
Turkey, per kg live weight	--	30.00
Rabbit, per kg		30-40
Onions, per kg	0.85	--

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	Price in State-Owned "NARMAG" Stores	Price on Free Market
Cabbage, per kg	0.85	--
Potatoes, per kg	1.15	--
Carrots, per kg	1.00	--
White beans, per kg	12-13	--
Peas, per kg	10.00	--
Lentils, per kg	10.00	--
Spinach, per kg	1.00	2.00
Canned vegetables, per kg	4-4.50	--
Canned tomatoes, per kg	3.00	--
Apples, per kg	4.20	3.00
Lemons and oranges, per kg	40.00	--
Nuts, per kg	12.00	--
Olives, per kg	25.60	--
Honey, per kg	40.00	--
Sugar, per kg	9.60	--
Lump sugar, per kg	10.00	--
Marmalade	8-20	--
Candy (caramels), per kg	14-24	--
Cocoa (almost unavailable), per kg	--	200
Coffee (not obtainable), per kg	--	320-400
Tea (a rarity), per kg	--	360
Lime-blossom tea, per kg	20.00	--
Alcoholic beverages		
White or red wine, per liter bottle	12.00	--
Vermouth	32.00	--
Slivovitz brandy	30-36	--
Cognac, per liter bottle	37	--

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	Price in State-Owned "NARMAG" Stores	Price on Free Market
Textiles		
Wool material for men's coats, per meter	200-340	--
Wool material for ladies' coats, per meter	135-400	--
Suiting (wool), per meter	150-390	--
Wool material for ladies' dresses, per meter	135-400	--
Satin, per meter	28-45	--
Silk material	60-80	--
Man's shirt	70-120	--
Man's underdrawers	32-48	--
Brassiere	20-25	--
Man's or lady's sweater	50-125	--
Necktie	26-40	--
Nylon stockings (available only on the black market)	--	200
Men's socks	15-18	--
Men's leather shoes	180-250	--
Ladies' leather shoes	240-280	--
Children's leather shoes	80-100	--
Cleated shoes	500-560	--

According to the wage schedule cited above, the yearly wages of an unskilled laborer are between 5,000 and 5,200 leva. A comparison of this figure with the necessary expenses for a year shows the low standard of living of the Bulgarian laborer. His bare minimum expenses for housing and clothing would amount to 3,700 leva. This means that he has only 1,300-1,500 leva for food, cigarettes, toilet articles, and other small expenditures, making no allowance for taxes, membership dues, etc. According to substantiated information from people who have recently been in Bulgaria, a common laborer has only about 3 leva to spend per day.

The following are prices of miscellaneous items of daily necessity:

	Leva
Rent for one furnished room	80
Rent for one unfurnished room	28-40
Heating stove, ordinary type	400

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	<u>Leva</u>
Quilt	500-600
Blanket, poor quality	280-322
Iron bed	240~
Bed table (cabinet type)	120-200
Cabinet with two doors	1,130
Cabinet with three doors	1,930
Wooden chair	56
Cigarettes, per pack of 20	1.93-2.40
Matches, per box	.40
Fuel wood, per cubic meter	320
Electric power for household use, per kilowatt	.28
Electric power for industrial use, per kilowatt	.48
Streetcar fare	.20-.40
Trolley-bus fare	.40
Women's slippers, pair	20
Tailoring for a man's suit	120-200 (2)

SOURCES

1. Interreport-Ost, No 259, 27 Jun 53
2. Ibid., No 260, 1 Jul 53

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